

esprit orchestra
explore

the new century

alex pauk music director & conductor

2004-05 season

New Wave Composers Festival Gala

Thursday May 26th, 2005

Jane Mallett Theatre, St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts



esprit orchestra

Esprit Orchestra – Thursday, May 26th, 2005
Alex Pauk – Music Director & Conductor

Flute

Douglas Stewart

Maria Pelletier

Christine Little

Oboe

Lesley Young

Karen Rotenberg

(also English Horn)

Clarinet

Max Christie

Colleen Cook (also bass clarinet)

Greg James

Bassoon

Gerald Robinson

William Cannaway (also contra bassoon)

Stephen Mosher

Horn

Gary Pattison

Vincent Barbee

Linda Bronicheski

Trumpet

Robert Venables

Raymond Tizzard

Anita McAlister

Trombone

Robert Ferguson

David Archer

Tuba

Scott Irvine

Harp

Sanya Eng

Piano/Celeste

Lydia Wong

David Swan

Midori Koga

Guitar/Mandolin

James Tait

Cimbalom

Richard Moore

Accordion

Joe Macerollo

Percussion

Blair MacKay

Trevor Tureski

Ryan Scott

Graham Hargrove

Mark Duggan

Violin 1

Fujiko Imajishi –

Concertmaster

Jayne Maddison

Anne Armstrong

Corey Gemmell

Sonia Vizante-Bucsa

Nancy Kershaw

Violin 2

Dominique Laplante

James Aylesworth

Ronald Mah

Michael Sproule

Louise Pauls

Stephanie Soltice

Nicole Zarry

Viola

Douglas Perry

Rhyll Peel

Katharine Rapoport

Johann Lotter

Cello

Paul Widner

Elaine Thompson

Marianne Pack

Andrew McIntosh

Bass

Tom Hazlitt

Robert Speer



esprit orchestra

Alex Pauk, Music Director & Conductor

Thursday, May 26th, 2005

Jane Mallett Theatre, St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts

7:15 p.m. - Pre-concert composers' talk

8:00 p.m. - Concert

GUEST ARTISTS

Shauna Rolston, cello

Joseph Macerollo, accordion

PROGRAMME

Sanctuary

(World Premiere)

Paul Frehner

Accord(ion) concerto

(Canadian Premiere)

Gyula Bánkövi

Intermission

Four Names of Beauty

Beauty

Beleza

Pie kno

Mei

(World Premiere)

Scott Wilson

Otogi No Kuni E...

for cello and orchestra

(World Premiere)

Chris Paul Harman

This concert will be broadcast by *Two New Hours* on **CBC Radio Two (94.1)** Canada's National new music program with host **Larry Lake** on Sunday, October 23rd, 2005 at 10:00 p.m.

Please join us for complimentary coffee & cookies in the lobby following the performance

ALEX PAUK

COMPOSER/FOUNDING MUSIC DIRECTOR & CONDUCTOR OF ESPRIT ORCHESTRA

Alex Pauk is a trendsetter in the field of contemporary music and a leading figure in film music scoring, conducting and production. In 1983, he founded the Toronto-based Esprit Orchestra to commission, perform and promote the music of today. With Esprit, Pauk engages the best composers and soloists from Canada and abroad. He has led the orchestra on several Canadian tours and is organizing Esprit's second European tour, set for 2006.

In 2000, the Toronto Musicians Association named Pauk the Toronto Musician of the Year. Through the orchestra's Toward A Living Art Education Program, Pauk devotes much time and energy to directly involving student composers and performers with Esprit's activities. In 2002, along with his film-composing partner Alexina Louie, he received the prestigious Louis Applebaum Composition Award for excellence in composing for film and television. His recent compositions for the concert stage include: *Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra*, *Flute Quintet* (flute and string quartet), and *Touch Piece* for orchestra, digital soundtrack, electroacoustic instruments and multi-screen video projections.

He has won wide acclaim for his orchestral and chamber ensemble works and has written extensively for dance, radio, musical theatre, feature films, made-for-TV dramas, documentaries, docu-dramas, animations and many performing arts films produced by Rhombus Media. In addition to the Esprit Orchestra, Pauk has conducted the Cologne Radio Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Vancouver Symphony, CBC Vancouver Radio Orchestra, Hamilton Philharmonic, Winnipeg Symphony, as well as smaller orchestras and ensembles throughout Canada.



Paul Frehner
Sanctuary

I was in the early stages of my work on the score of *Sanctuary* around the period of Christmas, 2004. It was around this time that the immense earthquake off the coast of Sumatra resulted in the deadly tsunami that struck numerous countries in and around the Indian Ocean. The magnitude of the catastrophe was and still is mind boggling. I, as countless others, could only watch in helpless horror and awe the news reports that described the unfolding and seemingly never-ending tragedy: vast numbers of dead and an even greater number of people for whom survival is now very much an issue as they have lost literally everything.

Sanctuary is my reaction to this cataclysmic event. It is both a reflection on sanctuary lost and an expression of hope.

The piece is divided into two movements. The first movement is expansive in breadth and musical gesture. I'm trying to depict an imaginary haven, a vast landscape that slowly evolves overtime. References and allusions are made to the musics of various Eastern cultures, though filtered through a Western viewpoint. Numerous solos emerge and fade back into the texture. They are like the voices of individuals that are heard briefly before passing on.

The opening of the second movement shatters the idyllic mood established by the first. My intention here not to depict musically a tsunami, it is rather to convey the sense of loss, confusion and despair that arises when a situation spirals out of control, when decisions are taken away and a person is guided by irresistible outside forces. The piece ends with a brief, fragmented return to the soloistic material from the first movement.

P.F.

Sanctuary was jointly commissioned by CBC Radio Music and Esprit with additional support from the Canada Council.

Gyula Bánkövi
Accord(ion) concerto

In the spring of 2001, the Hungarian Music Association, and through it, the National Cultural Basis Programme, contacted me to compose a new musical piece. By that time, I had long been dealing with the accordion that I considered an increasingly popular instrument. So I was happy to seize the opportunity and we agreed upon the composition of an accordion concerto that would have been written for a string orchestra, besides the solo instrument. But half a year passed between the signature of the contract and the start of the composition, so I completely forgot what we had agreed upon before – at least as regards the musical potential. So, when I finally started to work, composed the music for a grand orchestra in which the accordion was only slightly accentuated. I made the musical sketch of the piece in three days, then instrumented it in three weeks and did not think of the contrast at all. I was almost ready when the Association asked me to show them the first part of the composition. At this point, it turned out that I did not write the composition in a way that we agreed upon. Fortunately, only some smaller problems of instrumentation were left – so I did not stop finishing the work when the Hungarian Music Association told me not to support the presentation of the work as I did not fulfill the terms of the contract (as I composed a piece for a much larger ensemble). In the spring of 2002, through the good offices of a devoted contemporary music editor of Radio, Eszter Lazar, the Symphony Orchestra of Hungarian Radio accepted to present my musical composition. So, in April 2002, I finished the score.

This musical composition is not an accordion concerto but rather the competition of accordions built on four modes: minor, major, diminished and seventh chords. These are the basic harmonies of the accordion instrument. The play of words in the title, *Accord(ion) Concerto*, indicates it precisely that the piece is about the competition of harmonies and not that of the instruments and the orchestra.

Though it must be admitted that from among the instruments, the accordion plays the most prominent part. Besides the four harmonies, the sounding structure of the piece is blended by a combination of interval steps that finally extends to a major third by semitones. The musicians reach the semitone steps mainly with continuous glissando-playing, while trying to exceed by it the limits of the 12-tonal system. The continuous glissando-move is also present throughout the composition, increasing towards the end, diminishing again, returning to the world of semitones.

I wanted to paint a great fresco with the composition. Sometimes, the harmonies are sounding as if they surpassed each other, with the same intensity (forming heavy sounding blocks by it), and sometimes they appear from behind each other. But I also tried to make the changes of harmonies (that means also the competition of consonant and non consonant chords, due to the systems) not only on the basis of algebraic expressions but also in a way that it should captivate the listeners by the natural wavering, solution-ligature of music, as clear musically, the essential message of music cannot be replaced by the natural wavering, solution-ligature of music, as clear musicality, the essential message of music cannot be replaced by any algebraic or other structure.

The musical composition is dedicated to accordion player László Ernyei, who participated in making the recording, and the performance could not have been realized without him.

Scott Wilson

Four Names of Beauty

Beauty

Beleza

Piekno

Mei

This work marks the coming together of many different threads; the cross-pollination of a number of different areas both musical and philosophical. I've long had an interest in the notion of beauty, our understanding of it, and of how that understanding might be outlined, stretched, and shifted. One of the things which has lead me to explore is the use of various types of microtonality in my instrumental writing. Similarly, my recent work for instruments and electronics has involved breaking down the sounds of the instruments into smaller components which are microtonal in nature. These sounds are reassembled in idiosyncratic, and (hopefully) interesting ways, shifting and smearing their parts in space, time, and pitch, as well as allowing other sounds to resonate "through" them. When applying such techniques to harmonic sounds, I was intrigued by the fact that the results often seemed to somehow defy traditional notions of consonance and dissonance, at least in terms of how such things tend to be understood in relation to harmonic spectra. It occurred to me that this might provide the basis for an interesting alternative to traditional dissonance treatment, our understanding of which has of course formed our basis for the comprehension of most Western music. This is something which it seems to me continues to haunt us when we listen to too much contemporary music, including that of the atonal or post-tonal varieties, and this latent expectation is something I have long found to provide fertile ground for musical exploration.

In composing this piece for Esprit it seemed natural to bring some of these things together. I decided to make recordings of four speakers (two men and two women) saying the word "beauty" in their native languages, and analyze these recordings in a manner similar to that described above. The four words were Beauty, Beleza (Portugeuse), Piekno (polish), and Mei (Mandarin). Rather than being used for electroacoustic composition, these analyses form the basis of the pitch content and harmony of piece. Some amongst the audience may recognize that this approach shares much with that of the French "spectralist" school (albeit arrived at from a somewhat different direction), but I should point out that what I've done differs, at least to some extent. In addition to its rather different gestural language, *Four Names* is constructed with a somewhat looser approach to the interpretation of the analyses (which serve really as kind of territory for exploration), and with what seems to me to be a broader acceptance of harmonic as opposed to inharmonic material. In keeping with the kind of cross-pollination of ideas I've mentioned above it also involves the adaptation of my own idiosyncratic synthesis techniques to the practice of orchestration.

Naturally the listener should not expect to "hear" the words as they are played. They serve more as appoint of departure, or a poetic suggestion. The work as a whole attempts to play with the borders between beauty and ugliness, harmonicity and inharmonicity, consonance and dissonance (and even with the idea of being "in tune"), in a way which hopefully opens our minds to the limitations of such boundaries, even if might not necessarily succeed in changing them.

S.W.

Chris Paul Harman

Otogi No Kuni E...

In this new work for cello and orchestra, I have continued to explore the relationship between a solo instrument and ensemble, as I have done previously in my works "Catacombs" for flute and orchestra, "Uta" for viola and orchestra, and "Mabushii Sora E..." for piano and orchestra. As in those earlier works, the role of the solo cello is one which is always changing, yet never quite embracing the bravura ideal of the solo instrument in a traditional concerto. To this end, it could be argued that the most profound music for the solo cello is found in the slowest sections with the simplest and purest of materials, played without vibrato and filtered through the use of a heavy practice mute.

The ensemble itself has also undergone a dramatic transformation in this work. In seeking to redefine the hierarchy of the traditional orchestral configuration, the usual resources have been scaled back significantly, and in their place, an unusual assemblage of non-orchestral instruments including accordion, toy piano, almglocken, steel pan, cimbalom and guitar has been substituted. The result is a collective which is highly disparate in its sound, and unbalanced in its dynamic potential - elements which are manifest in the musical gestures themselves.

"*Otogi No Kuni E...*", roughly translated, means "towards a fairytale land" in Japanese. This title is taken from a Japanese popular song "Little Princess", written by Mariya Takeuchi and sung by the late Yukiko Okada.

CPH

Otogi No Kuni E... was commissioned by Esprit Orchestra for premiere with cellist Shauna Rolston. Esprit is grateful to the Canada Council for providing funding for commission.

Paul Frehner

Biography

Born in Montreal in 1970, Paul Frehner completed his Doctorate in music in 2004 at McGill University where he studied composition with Denys Bouliane. During his Master's degree at McGill, completed in 1998, he studied composition with Brian Cherney and orchestration with Bengt Hambraeus.

Frehner's works have been played in Canada and abroad by professional soloists, ensembles and orchestras including, among others, Almeida Opera, the Esprit Orchestra, the Prague Philharmonia, the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra, the North Holland Philharmonic Orchestra, the CBC Vancouver Orchestra, the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, pianist André Ristic, the Ensemble Contemporaine de Montreal and the Quasar Saxophone Quartet.

In 2001, Frehner was commissioned by the Genesis Foundation, in the context of the Genesis Opera Project, to compose *Sirius on Earth*, a one hundred-minute opera based on a libretto by Angela Murphy. Co-produced by Almeida Opera and Aldeburgh Productions, *Sirius on Earth* was premiered in the 2003 Almeida Opera Festival in London, England. It was subsequently toured to Aldeburgh where it opened the 2003 Proms season in Snape Maltings concert hall.

Frehner has received numerous awards and mentions both in Canada and on the international scene. Notable among these was the First Prize in the Prague Philharmonia's Symphony of the Third Millennium Composition Competition for his orchestral work, '*Elixirs*'. It received its world premiere on January 1, 2001, by the Prague Philharmonia in the Rudolfinum and was subsequently broadcast on Czech National Radio and Television. In 2000 he won First Prize in the Jeunesse Musicales World Orchestra's International Composition Competition for *Overture 2000*, a work for large orchestra. It was premiered January 1, 2000 in the Berlin Konzerthaus by the JMWO.

Beginning in September, 2005 Frehner will begin a two-year term as Composer in Residence at the Chapelle historique du Bon Pasteur in Montreal.

Paul Frehner's music has been performed and broadcast in Canada, Great Britain, Germany, Holland, the Czech Republic, Malaysia and Japan.

Scott Wilson

Biography

Scott Wilson was born in Vancouver, Canada. Undergraduate studies at Simon Fraser University (where his teachers included Owen Underhill, Barry Truax and Rodney Sharman) lead to an early interest in electronic music and mixed media work. During this time he co-founded the new music group Ensemble Symposium, and served as president of Vancouver Pro Musica. He received a master's degree from Wesleyan University Middletown, Connecticut, where he worked with Ron Kuivila, Neely Bruce, Alvin Lucier and Anthony Braxton, among others. A year in Germany as a guest artist at the Center for Art and Media Technology's Institute for Music and Acoustics lead to the development of his large scale electroacoustic work *Müllmusik*, which has since been released on CD by the French label 326music. During this time he was also a guest student of the German composer Wolfgang Rihm. In 2001 he began doctoral studies at the University of Toronto where his primary teachers were Christos Hatzis and Gary Kulesha.

Wilson's work spans a wide variety of genres and means, running the gamut from orchestra to tuba with live electronics. His music has been presented internationally, with notable performances in Canada, the U. S., Germany, England, Ireland, France, Belgium, The Netherlands, Japan, New Zealand, and Switzerland. It has been broadcast on CBC Radio #. Recent presentations of his work have included ZKMusikFest, the Hubbersfield Festival, the Open Ears Festival, the National Arts Centre Young Composers' Programme in Ottawa, and the premiere of his work *Tadayo* for koto and Japanese gamelan in Tokyo. He currently teaches composition and live electronic music at the University of Birmingham in England.



Gyula Bánkövi Biography

Gyula Bánkövi was born in Dunaújváros, Hungary, on July 22, 1966. Bánkövi, started to gain experiences in the field of arts already at the age of 6, when he studied ballet, learnt to play the piano, and the bassoon. Bánkövi, studied composition at Ferenc Liszt Muisic Academy under Miklós Kocsár and Attila Bozay. In the meantime, continued to love nature passionately – so, his first successful composition was *Hydrophony* that expressed the eternal round of water in nature. Bánkövi is interested in all kinds of musical potential: composes for full orchestra, chamber ensembles, children's and mixed choirs, wind and percussion bands, solo instruments, and electronic devices alike.

Bánkövi prefers to combine the special nature of electro-acousitics with the strange, typically 20th century style of traditional instruments. His composition entitled *Silver-winged Butterflies*, written for flute, violoncello and electronics, was qualified for the category of proposed works at the Rosrtum of Composers in 2000. In recent years, he has been greatly influenced by the art of George Crumb, Peteris Vasks, Arvo Pärt and Giya Kancheli.

Since 1992, Bánkövi has been working at Hungarian Radio and as a music editor of Bartók Channel, intends to select the most outstanding works of contemporary music and to present them to Hungarian listeners. His works achieved success at several composers' competitions and festival. In 2000, he was the first to receive the Benedek Istvánffy Prize founded by the Hungarian Composers' Association.



Chris Paul Harman

Biography

Chris Paul Harman (b. 1970, Toronto, Ontario) studied classical guitar, cello, and electronic music with Barton Wigg, Alan Stellings, and Wes Wraggett respectively. His works have been performed by many ensembles and orchestras in Canada and abroad, including the Asko Ensemble, the CBC Radio Orchestra, the Esprit Orchestra, the Montreal Symphony Orchestra, the New Music Concerts Ensemble, the Noordhollands Philharmonisch, the St. Lawrence String Quartet, the Tokyo Symphony, and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra.

Mr. Harman has been commissioned by guitarists William Beauvais and Sylvie Proulx, violinist Jacques Israelievitch, oboist Lawrence Cherney, Continuum, the Esprit Orchestra, the Guelph Spring Festival, Music Canada 2000, the National Arts Centre Orchestra, the Sabat-Clarke duo, the SMCQ, the Standing Wave Ensemble, the SRC, Soundstreams Canada, the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Funding for these works came from the Canada Council for the Arts, the Laidlaw Foundation, the Ontario Arts Council, from the organizations themselves (CBC, NACO, SRC) as well as from private sources.

In 1986, Chris Paul Harman was a finalist in the CBC Radio National Competition for Young Composers, and was the Grand Prize winner at the same competition in 1990. "Iridescence", the work which earned him the Grand Prize, was subsequently awarded first prize in the under-30 category at the 1990 International Rostrum of Composers in Paris. At the 1994 International Rostrum of Composers, Harman's "Concerto for Oboe and Strings" was chosen as a Recommended Work in the General Category for composers of all ages. In consequence, both works have been broadcast in some 25 countries.

In 2001, Mr. Harman's work "Uta" received an honourable mention at the Gaudeamus International Music Week, and his work "Amerika" was awarded the Jules Leger Prize for new chamber music in Canada, and shortlisted for the Prix de Composition de la Fondation Prince Pierre de Monaco.



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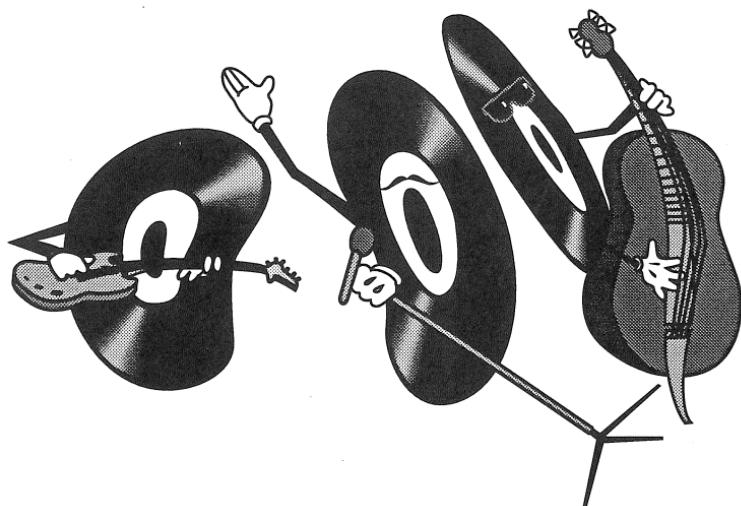
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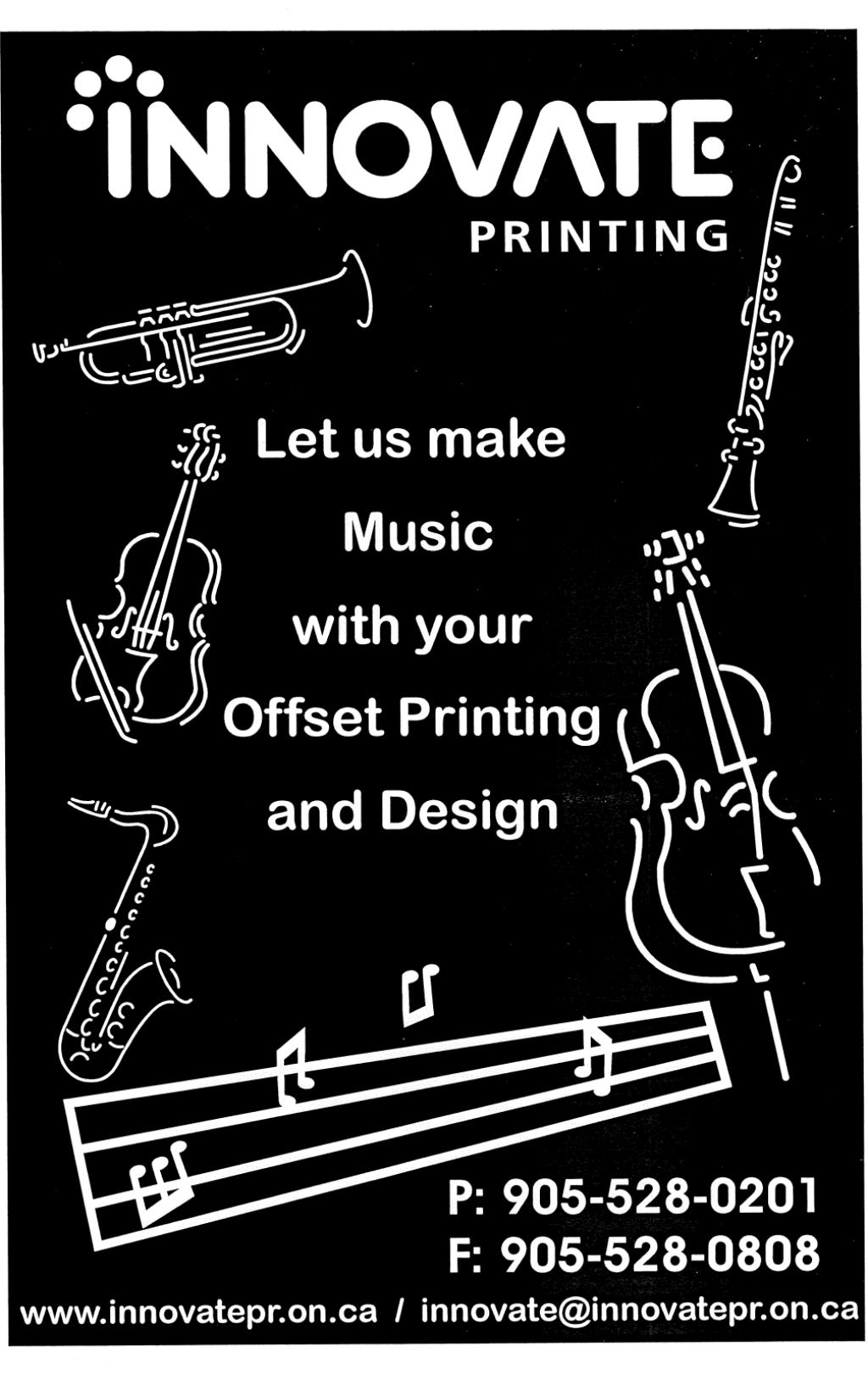
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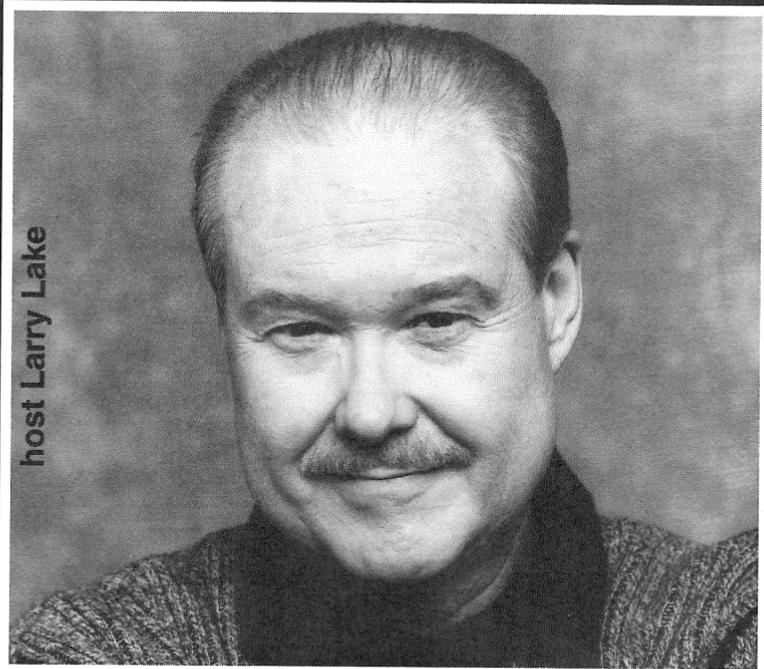
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